



Rose, White and Blue Parade

Posted by [Pierluigi Oliverio](#) on Monday, July 06, 2009

The 2nd Annual Rose, White and Blue Parade put on by the Alameda Business Association (ABA) with assistance from the Redevelopment Agency, was a fun-filled day for everyone on Saturday, July 4.

In 1896, The Alameda (one of San Jose's historical streets, dubbed the "Beautiful Way") was home to the Carnival of Roses, which continued with The Fiesta de Las Rosas Parade in the '20s. At that time, it was second to only Pasadena in its size. However, this tradition like the trolley car that used to roll down The Alameda and the historic Hanchett Park Pillars faded away.

Through the motivation of the ABA, the parade was reborn last year, with former San Jose mayors Susan Hammer and Janet Gray Hayes as the grand marshals. Although last year marked the parade's first year since the '20s, the turnout was great with neighbors enjoying the show from their front yards while others rode their decorated bikes, scooters and drove their cars in the parade.

This year, the parade and festival that followed experienced increased participation, including groups like the Rose Garden volunteers, Trace Elementary school, St. Martin's Brownie Troop, vintage car-owners and a «dancing bungalow homes» troupe, among many others. Even Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and Mayor Reed rode in the parade.

More people lined the route this year, which included areas from West San Carlos winding through tree lined streets down to The Alameda. Nearly every house had a crowd outside made up of neighbors and residents from all over San Jose. There were kids selling lemonade and people enjoying food and drinks on their front yards. Houses and people were decorated with American flags for our nation's birthday. The parade was genuine Americana.

Events like this do not happen by themselves nor do they happen overnight. They happen with volunteers who are dedicated to the vision and goal, which in this case is ABA. I am very proud of the ABA

for organizing this event to remind us of our past and to appreciate the future opportunities.

Also on Saturday, there was an unveiling of the the first recreated historical pillar on The Alameda at Hanchett (the corner marked by Pete's Coffee & Rosie's Pizza). Last year, I requested funding for this project, fondly known now as "the Pillar Project," from the RDA; it's similar to what was done on Jackson Street in Japantown. I think that historic heritage is important, especially when it caters to the entire community, including those who come to visit our historic areas. The goal is to build one pilot pillar so that community members see what it could be like to restore all of the original pillars over time. The residents, led by Lori Bird, formed a nonprofit to raise money. This year, they held a successful historical house tour to bring awareness to their efforts and took a large step in their fundraising goals. Another historic home tour is planned for May 2010.

I believe that all neighborhoods have uniqueness and that giving neighborhoods a sense of place by a marquee of some type adds to community awareness. Projects like this, where some city money is used to jump start the process with the community taking on the majority of the fundraising and organization, represent healthy partnerships that add identity and beauty to our City. I hope we see more of these types of partnerships.

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